

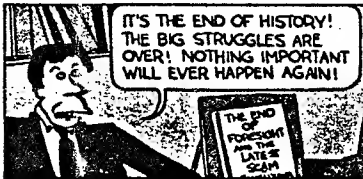
GRAUSTARK

The first 'zine for the postal play of Diplomacy, a game of negotiation and conflict designed by Allan B. Calhamer and published by Hasbro

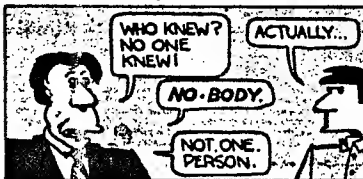
#788 2002D, "Fall 1916"; 2004C, "Winter 1910"; 2006A, "Spring 1905" 10 January 2009

SEARCH AND DESTROY By Ted Rall

IN 1992 NEOCONSERVATIVE THEORIST FRANCIS FUKUYAMA WROTE A BEST-SELLING BOOK THAT TURNED OUT TO HAVE BEEN WRONG ABOUT EVERYTHING.



WHAT'S A DISCREDITED MORON TO DO? WRITE ANOTHER BESTSELLING BOOK, ABOUT HOW STUPID HE HAD BEEN TO SUPPORT BUSH AND HIS DUMB WARS.



THEN, IN 1998, HE SIGNED AN INFAMOUS MANIFESTO THAT SAID THAT INVADING IRAQ WOULD BE EASY AND MAKE US ALL SORTS OF COOL NEW FRIENDS.



SOMETHING'S BUGGING ME, THOUGH. IF FUKUYAMA IS ALWAYS WRONG, HE MUST BE WRONG NOW, WHICH MEANS BUSH IS ACTUALLY AWESOME!



THIS MODERN WORLD By Tom Tomorrow

Occam's Razor: the principle which states that the simplest explanation is generally best.

IN ORDER TO BELIEVE THAT THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT SANCTION THE USE OF TORTURE-- WHICH IT CERTAINLY DOES NOT!

YOU'D HAVE TO BE A TERROR-LOVING LIBERAL ELFIST TO SUGGEST OTHERWISE!



--AND THAT THE BRUTAL DEATHS OF PRISONERS AT BAGRAM AND GAIAM CAN ONLY BE BLAMED ON A FURTHER HANDFUL OF BAD APPLES--

I THINK THE FACT THAT WE EVEN KNOW ABOUT THESE DEATHS--

--IS PROOF THE SYSTEM WORKS!



--YOU MUST ALSO BELIEVE THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ABU GHAIB REALLY DOES REST WITH A HANDFUL OF BAD APPLES--

ALL OF WHOM HAVE BEEN APPROPRIATELY PUNISHED. END OF STORY.

IT SEE NO NEED TO EVER SPEAK OF THE MATTER AGAIN.



--AND THAT LOW-RANKED BAD APPLES AT EACH FACILITY JUST HAPPENED TO DEVELOP THE SAME SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES OF ABUSE AND HUMILIATION INDEPENDENT OF ONE ANOTHER.

IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE CRAZY COINCIDENCES!

OR IT WOULD BE, IF IT WERE TRUE. WHICH OF COURSE IT IS NOT.



--AND THAT REPORTS FROM FBI AGENTS OF ABUSE AT GUANTANAMO ARE SIMPLY NOT CREDIBLE--

I BET THE M.S.M. QUOTED THEM COMPLETELY OUT OF CONTEXT!

WHAT IF BY 'SHACKLED TO THE FLOOR IN A POOL OF FILTH' THEY ACTUALLY MEANT 'RELAXING IN A BIG COMFY BED'?



FURTHER OCCAM'S RAZOR--THIS IS MORE LIKE OCCAM'S SLEDGE-HAMMER.

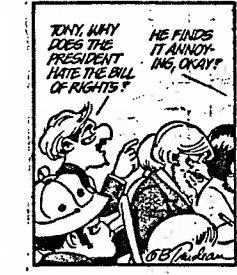
IT'S LIKE I ALWAYS SAY--THE MOST CONVOLUTED AND UNLIKELY EXPLANATION IS USUALLY BEST.

AS LONG AS IT WHEN IT ALMOST FAVORS US.

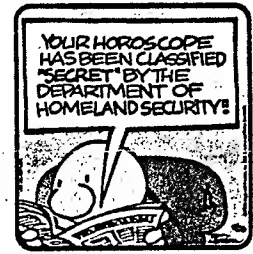
WHEN IT ALWAYS DOES.



MEET MR. LUCKEY



ZIGGY



...Please stand by--- We're experiencing factual difficulties...

HAPPY OLD YEAR!

(President Obama's cabinet is filled with left-over Republicans and Clintonites.)

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

I recommend that postal Diplomacy players mail in their moves rather than phoning them in. But if you do phone them in, for the time being don't leave a message on my answering machine. I have discovered that it is currently out of order, and will not record. If I don't answer the phone, phone back later. I will inform players when I can get the answering machine repaired.

*

Today's Terrorism Alert Color Code is Fading Royal Purple, indicating that President Bush's attempt to be an absolute monarch is almost over.

*

Graustark is the Very First bulletin for the postal play of Diplomacy. It is published every fourth Saturday by John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226-5302. Diplomacy is a board game of negotiation and conflict for the period of World War I. It was designed by Allan B. Calhamer and is now published by Hasbro. Another new postal Diplomacy game is now being organized in Graustark, at a game fee of \$35. (For Canadian and Mexican addresses the game fee is \$50, and for other foreign addresses it is \$100, or 75 euros in cash.) This game fee includes a subscription to Graustark for as long as the game lasts, whether or not you are eliminated. With your game fee send in a list of the countries you'd like to play, in your order of preference, and I'll try to put you as close to the top of that list as I can. If you do not already have the postal rules for Diplomacy, which were last published in Graustark #749, let me know when you send in your game fee, and I'll send you a copy.

This is

O At
P Great
E Intervals
R This
A Appears
T To
I Inflamm
O Optic
N Nerves

Graustark subscriptions for non-players are 10 issues for \$15 for U. S. addresses, and \$40 or 30 euros for others. Back issues as available are 10 issues for \$5 for U. S. addresses. To foreign addresses, back issues have the same price as for foreign subscriptions. Players who phone in their moves should call me at 718-693-1579.

I want to again remind players that the U. S. Postal "Service" is not capable of reliably getting mail here in less than a week. Please take this into account in sending in your moves. If, a few times, your moves have arrived here by mail in less than a week, do not assume that this will always be the case.

Graustark readers who are interested in postal games which don't run here, are invited to write to the publishers of 'zines with which I trade, and ask what game openings they have. For their addresses, see all the readers indicated by "(T)" for "trade" in the Graustark Directory in this issue. Several of these publishers run a wide variety of postal games.

*

Q: "How does one address a supporter of the Hamas attacks designed to destroy Israel?"

A: "Adolf."

*

With the recent Christmas season, one of the silliest advertising campaigns returned to the air. One Rocky Moselle is offering, for a price, to re-name a star for anybody as a holiday gift.

Actually, star names are assigned for traditional reasons by astronomers, who then use them in their professional publications. I rather doubt that the *Astrophysical Journal* will receive indignant letters from Moselle, or from a recipient of one of these ridiculous "gifts", protesting that they are still calling the brightest star in Taurus "Aldebaran" when it has been renamed "Jennifer Blennerhasset". But the whole idea produces nothing but profit for Moselle, who claims that these new names are registered "in book form with the copyright office". All this means is that he is merely copyrighting his sucker list.

However, Moselle is not the only profiteer who is trying to turn astronomy into a profitable sideline. The *New York Daily News* of 28 December 2008 has four pages of whoroscopes by an ass trologer who is trying to predict the events of 2009 based on her

PLEASE STAND BY

Now that I have resumed regular publication of Graustark, I am willing to take over games that have been abandoned by their gamesmasters. So if you are a postal gamesmaster who is no longer able to publish, please get in touch with me and with the Orphan Games Director, Michael Lowrey. (See the Graustark Directory for his address.) If the game is to continue in Graustark, I would need the addresses of all active players, the current position, and a list of who owns which supply centers. If subscription money can be passed along to me, fine. Otherwise I will ask players to join a new game in Graustark, or to subscribe to Graustark if they do not already do so. Players who resign or drop out can be replaced by Graustark stand-by players.

It is best if this is done quickly, should it be necessary. If a game is abandoned for too long, some players may lose interest, and may not continue to play when it resumes under another gamesmaster.

Stand-by players are always needed for postal Diplomacy games in Graustark. If you volunteer as a stand-by, you may be called upon whenever a current player misses a move. If you send in moves for that country for the next turn, and the present player does not, you will take over play of that position. No game fee will be asked, though you should keep your subscription current, or enroll in a new Graustark game. No stand-by will be called upon in a game in which he or she has already played.

Stand-by volunteers who are willing to take on additional games of postal Diplomacy are listed below. A stand-by player who is already playing in a Graustark game is indicated by "*". If you wish your name added to or removed from this list, please let me know.

Hank Alme*	Harley Jordan*	Eric Verheiden	Bill Young
John R. Biehl	Michael Quirk*	Fred Wiedemeyer*	

2004C

"Winter 1910"

GERMANY (Mathias): Builds A Kie.

TURKEY (Bruce): Builds F Con.

The deadline for "Spring 1911" moves is NOON, FRIDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2009. The vote on a draw fails of the necessary unanimity. It is again submitted to the players for a vote by the next deadline.

MUNICH Dance Hall: "You can dance, You can dance, Having the time of your life..."

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 2)

superstitions.

*

If our trivial Presidents have interested you in presidential trivia, then note that with the inauguration of President Obama we will have four living ex-Presidents, one short of the record. (In 1861 there were Van Buren, Tyler, Fillmore, Pierce, and Buchanan. In 1993 there were Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Bush the Father.)

*

As for President Obama, his approach to the current economic crisis seems to be badly needed public works financed by deficit spending. This means that people may be calling him "Franklin Delano Obama", since this approach worked during FDR's presidency. The stock market has reportedly had its worst year since 1931, and that was a bad year indeed. In 1931 my father graduated from college with a degree in dairy bacteriology. The only job he could get in that line was a milk route, and he had to go more than halfway across the country to get that.

*

This issue may be a bit late because some players never got their copies of #787, and had to get their positions from other players or from me. Both the U. S. and Canadian postal "services" were responsible for these failings. I have noticed that whenever the postal "service" delays or loses mail, or leaves stamps uncanceled (which

(continued on p. 7)

2002D

"Fall 1916"

EASTWARD HO!

ENGLAND (Wiedemeyer): A Mos S GERMAN A Ukr-Sev; A St.P S A Mos; F Bar, F Nwy, F Nrg, & F Lon hold.

FRANCE (Lischett): F Ion S F Gre-Aeg; F Alb-Gre; A Ser S A Tri; A Bul-Con; F Gre-Aeg; A Tri S A Ser; F Tyr, F Tun, A Nap, A Pie, A Par, & F Mid hold.

GERMANY (Quirk): A Sil-Gal; A Ber-Sil; A War-Ukr; A Mun holds; A Ukr-Sev; A Rum S A Ukr-Sev; A Vie S A Bud; F Bal-Swe; F Bot-Swe; A Bud S A Rum.

RUSSIA (Jordan): F Eas-Smy; A Arm-Ank; A Con holds; A Sev holds.

Underlined moves are not possible. Russia retreats A Sev-Arm. The vote on a draw fails of the necessary unanimity, and is again submitted to the players. The High Combatant Powers now control the following supply centers:

ENGLAND: Edi, Liv, Lon, Mos, Nwy, St.P. (6)

FRANCE: Bel, Bre, Bul, Gre, Mar, Nap, Par, Por, Rom, Ser, Spa, Tri, Tun, Ven. (14)

GERMANY: Ber, Bud, Den, Hol, Kie, Mun, Rum, Sev, Swe, Vie, War. (11)

RUSSIA: Ank, Con, Smy. (3)

France may build two new units, and Germany may build one. Russia must remove one unit. The deadline for these "Winter 1916" moves is NOON, FRIDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2009.

2006A

"Spring 1905"

WIN A FEW, LOSE A FEW

ENGLAND (Wiedemeyer): A Bre-Par; F Mid-Spa(s.c.); F Bar-St.P(n.c.); F Nwy S F Bar-St.P(n.c.); F Nrg-NAT; F Eng-Pic.

FRANCE (Alme): F Por S ITALIAN F Spa(s.c.)-Mid; A Par-Gas.

GERMANY (Jordan): A Gas & A Bur S ENGLISH A Bre-Par; A Mun S A Bur; F Swe-Bot; A Sil S AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN A Vie-Gal; A Pru-War.

ITALY (Burgess): A Mar-Spa; A Gre-Bul; F Spa(s.c.)-Mid; F Lyo S A Mar-Spa; F Wes S F Spa(s.c.)-Mid; A Ven-Pie; F Nap-Tyr.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY (Williams): A Vie-Boh; A Rum-Gal; A Bud S A Rum-Gal; A Ser-Rum; F Aeg-Ion; A Tyr-Mun.

RUSSIA (Biehl): A Gal-Ukr; A War S A Gal-Ukr; F St.P(n.c.) holds; A Smy holds; F Con-Aeg; A Sev-Arm; A Mos S A War.

Underlined moves are not possible. The Russian F St.P(n.c.) and French A Par are dislodged and annihilated. England must retreat F Mid-Naf, -Iri, -Eng, or -Bre, or remove the unit. The direction of this retreat should be sent in by IMMEDIATE RETURN MAIL, and all players will be informed. The deadline for "Fall 1905" moves, which may be made conditional on the direction of this English retreat, is NOON, FRIDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2009.

WHEN DO YOU EXPIRE?

The subscriptions of the following readers expire with the indicated issue of Graustark. This information is valid to the date of 9 January 2009. See p. 2 for information about extending your subscription or joining a new game.

790 - Mike Fisher
797 - W. Andrew York

797 - Eric Verheiden
799 - Mike Barno

799 - Brenton Verploeg

DUNGEONS & CHRISTIANS - CXCXV

I have just received the latest issue of the CAR-PGa Newsletter, Vol. 18, #1, published in January 2009 by Paul Cardwell Jr., 1127 Cedar, Bonham, TX 75418. This publication of the Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games carries, among other information, reports on accusations that Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) and other role-playing games (RPGs) are in some way harmful. The most extreme of such reports come from some Christians who actually claim that the demons that sometimes appear to be fought in these games are taken seriously by their designers and players, and that a D&D session is actually a sort of satanic worship service. This is particularly a problem in prisons, whose managements sometimes restrict or forbid the play of RPGs. There also seems to be a belief circulated among police agencies that RPGs are in some unstated way responsible for criminal activity. It will be recalled that the accusation against Michael Crowe and two of his friends, that they killed Michael's sister, were based on the fact that those teen-age boys played RPGs. Eventually, of course, the police interrogations of these boys were thrown out of court, and a drifter was found responsible for the girl's murder.

This issue begins with a report on CAR-PGa's 2008 activities. Apparently the "collapse of the Internet discussion group". CAR-PGa membership is down to 22, although what it lacks in quantity it makes up in quality. Six members have earned doctorates, and three more have gone as far as master's degrees.

Most importantly, "we are still in need of someone with access in the mass media data base, Nexis, for a serendipitous search of major newspapers and news magazines for RPG coverage." Someone with access to Lexis and its references to legal cases would also be welcome. And there ought to be more cooperation between CAR-PGa and the Games Manufacturers Association (GAMA) than currently exists. There are still media reports which blame RPGs for various unwholesome results, and more information is needed about these and about gamers' responses to them. "We still have the same old problem that when a case breaks, the media are quick to blame our games for whatever happened, but as the trial starts, games are left out of the coverage because they rarely come up once perjury may be involved, and once the verdict comes around, it is even more difficult to find out how the accusation was resolved because the case is so old it is rarely front page and therefore is not likely to be indexed (outside Nexis, which we can't get) or picked up by other media."

CAR-PGa Newsletter also includes a list of new publications in the RPG field, and a useful list of upcoming gaming conventions. Subscriptions are \$15 a year for U. S. readers and \$20 a year for others.

Though it does not involve RPGs, there is a discussion of alleged satanic influence in popular culture by Gordon Stein and Marie J. MacNee in their book *Hoaxes!: Dupes, Dodges & Other Dastardly Deceptions* (1995, Visible Ink Press, Detroit). "Some Fundamentalist Christian ministries," they write, "have suggested that Satan prodded rock groups to record satanic messages backwards (backward masking) over the soundtracks of a number of rock albums. The messages could supposedly be heard clearly when the record or tape was played backwards, sending subliminal messages to the brain when played forwards."

The problem with this unlikely accusation is that no such thing actually could happen even if such a message were recorded, as several people cited by the authors have discovered. Besides, how many teen-age rock music enthusiasts are likely to possess equipment that can play records or tapes backwards. Still, "among the groups blacklisted by Fundamentalists are the Beatles, Black Oak Arkansas, Electric Light Orchestra, Queen, Jefferson Starship, Led Zeppelin, Styx, the Eagles, Rolling Stones, Venom, and Mötley Crüe...Many Fundamentalists claim that subliminal messages are present in Christian rock songs as well....Television evangelist Jimmy Swaggart condemned 'so-called Christian rock' as a 'diabolical force undermining Christianity from within.'"

Two Christian tracts carrying this message are entitled "Communism, Hypnotism, and the Beatles" and "Rhythm, Rock, and Revolution". This, like the accusations against D&D, seem to be the product of the commonly encountered attitude: "If I'm a Christian and I don't like it, it *must* be satanic." An argument allegedly 'proving' this case is then cobbled together.

THE GRAUSTARK DIRECTORY

Players in a current postal Diplomacy games are indicated by its Boardman Number, with the initial of the country being played, and with "S" indicating a substitute player. (E. g., "2006A-R" or "2002D-FS".) Paying subscribers will be indicated by the number of the issue with which the subscription expires. Other designations are:

C: complimentary copy for a gamer

N: entrant in the next Graustark postal Diplomacy game

R: complimentary copy for a non-gamer interested in the mystery novel reviews

T: trade copy

U: uncomplimentary copy

This directory is accurate to the date of 9 January 2009. Please let me know of any corrections or additions that need to be made, particularly if you want your nine-digit ZIP code, phone number, fax number, or e-mail address added to your listing. This is particularly important for electronic addresses, which seem to change more frequently than do postal addresses.

If you are already a Graustark subscriber when you decide to send in a game fee, then when the game begins, the number of issues you had coming when you joined will be added to your subscription once the game ends. After your name in the Directory will appear some such notation as "2004C-T+6".

Stephen Agar (T), 4 Cedar Gardens, Brighton BN1 6YD, ENGLAND; 01273-562430;
<stephen@stephenagar.com>

Hank Alme (2004C, 2006A-FS), 7017 Jeweled Hand Circle, Columbia, MD 21044;
410-531-55131 <almehj@alummi.rice.edu>

Thom Anderson (R), #5-D, 10 Park Terrace East, New York, NY 10034

Mike Barno (799), 634 Dawson Hill Road, Spencer, NY 14883-9712

Ruth Berman (R), 2809 Drew Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55416-4209

John R. Biehl (2004C-R, 2006A-R), #8, 11530 84th Avenue, Delta, BC V4C 2M1, CANADA;
604-816-0460; <jrb@dccnet.com>.

Mark Blackman (C), Apt. 4A, 1745 E. 18th St., Brooklyn, NY 11229

Paul Bolduc (U), 203 Devon Court, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32547-3110; 850-863-9081;
<prbolduc@aol.com>; <bolduc@eglin.af.com>

Anne Braude (R), 5313 W. Acapulco Lane, Glendale, AZ 85306-3416

Colin Bruce (2004C-T+6), 30 Almoners' Avenue, Cambridge CB1 8PA, ENGLAND

Jim Burgess (2006A-I, T), 664 Smith St., Providence, RI 02908-4327; 401-351-0287;
<burgess@world.std.com>; web page <<http://devel.diplom.org/DipPouch/Postal/Zines/TAP/index.html>>

Allan B. Calhamer (C), 501 N. Stone, La Grange Park, IL 60525-5523

Paul Cardwell Jr. (C), 1127 Cedar, Bonham, TX 75418-2913; 903-583-9296

David Charlton (C), 150 The Parade, Island Bay, Wellington 6002, NEW ZEALAND

Columbia Games Inc. (C), P. O. Box 3457, Blaine, WA 98231

Jim Dunnigan (C), 328 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011

Paul Evans (T), 180 Aylsham Dr., Ickenham, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 8UF, ENGLAND

Mark Fassio (U), 276 Yates Lane, Pendleton, KY 40055-7751

Sue Feder (R), Historical Mystery Appreciation Society, 3 Goucher Woods Court, Towson, MD 21286; fax 410-847-9303; <monkshould@home.com>; <<http://members.home.net/monkshould>>

Mike Fisher (790), #2, 43 W. Manheim St., Philadelphia, PA 19144-2942

Timothy R. Haffey Sr. (U), 810 53rd Ave., Oakland, CA 94601; 510-536-3513;
<trhaffey@yahoo.com>

Chris Hassler (T), 2000 S. Armour Court, La Habra, CA 90631; 562-690-7827; fax 562-690-7827; <chassler@adelphia.com>

Sharon Heap (C), 2876 NY Route 26 South, Vestal, NY 13856

Raymond & Faith Heuer (R), 2nd floor, 9 Beacon Terrace, Keansburg, NJ 07734-1914

Tom Howell (T), 365 Storm King Road, Port Angeles, WA 98363; 360-928-9698;
<off-the-shelf@olympus.net>

Harley Jordan (2002D-RS, 2006A-G), 109 Sunnyside Dr., Rochester, NY 14623; 585-475-9832

Susan Keaveny (R), 1030 Tyrus Court, North Merrick, NY 11566-1035

Paul D. Kenny (T), 9 Cobblestone Road, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003-1420

Paul Koch (2004C), 24920 Fairmount Dr., Dearborn, MI 48124; 313-274-6579
 Timothy Lane (R), P. O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281
 Robert Lesco (T), 49 Parkside Drive, Brampton, Ontario L6Y 2H1, CANADA; 905-452-6304;
 <rlesco@yahoo.com>
 Andy Lischett (2002D-FS, T), 2402 Ridgeland Ave., Berwyn, IL 60402; 708-788-1507
 Rick Loomis (C), Flying Buffalo Inc., P. O. Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252
 Michael Lowrey (C), 6903 Kentucky Derby Drive, Charlotte, NC 28215-6507; 704-569-4269;
 <mlowrey@infionline.net>
 Joseph T. Major (C), 1409 Christy Ave., Louisville, KY 40204-2040
 Brad Martin (C), 180 Peninsula Road, Maylands 6051, Western Australia, AUSTRALIA;
 <Westfront@hotmail.com>
 Dan Mathias (2004C-G), 509 Bayview Drive, Lusby, MD 20657; 410-326-2568;
 <dcmathias@comcast.net>
 David Milliams (C), Paideia School, 1509 Ponce de Leon Ave., Atlanta, GA 30307-1666;
 404-377-0032 fax; <milliams.david@paideiaschool.org>; <www.paideiaschool.org>;
 <www.krause.com/static/comics.htm>
 Maggie Montgomery (R), Apt. 819, 325 W. 45th St., New York, NY 10036
 Brendan Mooney (2004C-I), 423 Lenox Ave., Westfield, NJ 07090; 908-654-0527;
 <bkmoooney@comcast.net>
 Albert A. Nofi (C), 3506 Duval Street, Austin, TX 78705; <anofi@aol.com>
 Carsten Obst (T), Pechsteinstr. 13, D-24539 Neumünster, GERMANY
 Keith Wm. Oschman (U), Riverside Christian School, Lost Creek, KY 41348
 Michael P. Quirk (2002D-GS, 2006A, N), 940 Beckett Crossing Drive, Mundelein, IL 60060;
 847-837-0489
 Berend E. Renken (N), Apt. 303, 10545 Greenwood Drive, Seattle, WA 98133-8781
 Roberta Rogow (R), 1755-A Manor Drive, Irvington, NJ 07111
 Karl Schmit (2006A), 1509 O'Keefe Road, De Pere, WI 54115; 920-338-8402;
 <diplomacy@new.rr.com>
 Bruce Schneier (C), Counterpane Systems, 101 E. Minnehaha Parkway, Minneapolis, MN 55419
 Gary Tesser (R), #5-A, 2455 Haring St., Brooklyn, NY 11235
 Eric Verheiden (2002D, 797), 1805 Vista del Oro, Fullerton, CA 92831-1331;
 <everheid@adelphia.net>
 Brenton Verploeg (799), 1980 Tigertail Rd., Coconut Grove, FL 33133
 Conrad von Metzke (C), 4374 Donald Ave., San Diego, CA 92117-3813; 858-270-8313;
 <metske@san.rr.com>
 Stephen T. Whitmore (C), 350 Old Paper Mill Road, Newark, DE 19711; 302-368-1127
 Fred Wiedemeyer (2002D-ES, 2004C-F, 2006A-E), Box 92010, Meadowbrook RPO, Edmonton,
 Alberta T6T 1N1, CANADA; 780-465-6432; cell 780-497-8283; <wiedem@planet.eon.net>
 Don Williams (2006A-A), 27505 Artine Dr., Saugus, CA 91350-2193; 661-575-7252 (cell);
 661-297-3947 (home); 909-350-6723 (business); 909-350-7676 (fax); <dwilliams
 @fontana.org>; <www.fontana.org>
 W. Andrew York (797), P. O. Box 201117, Austin, TX 78720-1117; <wandrew88@gma:.com>
 Bill Young (N), 2304 James Buchanan Drive, Elizabethtown, PA 17022; 717-361-5768

THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY (continued from p. 3)

is also happening), there will shortly be a demand for higher* postal rates. Since U. S. postal rates were increased in May 2007 and May 2008, we may see another increase in May of this year.

*

There has recently been released a film entitled *Valkyrie*, about the July 1944 attempt by German officers to assassinate Adolf Hitler and negotiate an end to World War II. Tom Cruise, already notorious in Germany for his activities with the nut cult "Scientology", plays Colonel Klaus Count Schenck von Stauffenberg, the leader of the plot. Actually, Stauffenberg and the other officers in the plot were motivated not by opposition to Hitler's plans for Europe and the world, but by the fact that Germany was losing the war.

A number of fortuitous events contributed to the failure of the plot, whose name "Valkyrie" appropriately meant "chooser of the slain" in ancient Norse mythology. Stauffenberg, who had volunteered to take the explosive briefcase into Hitler's

underground bunker in East Prussia, was pressed for time and could not activate the entire bomb. The meeting had been moved from the underground bunker to an above-ground building whose walls could not contain the blast. After Stauffenberg had left the building, another officer was inconvenienced by the location of the briefcase and moved it so that a table leg shielded Hitler from the full force of the blast. And, when Stauffenberg flew back to Berlin after placing the bomb, he was horrified to discover that his fellow conspirators had not seized the propaganda ministry, or shot Goebbels and Himmler, or otherwise done anything to further the plot. These failures doomed the whole plot; Stauffenberg and several hundred others were summarily executed within the next couple of days. By one of those curious coincidences with which history is filled, Stauffenberg was the great-grandson of Count von Gneisenau, one of the leaders of German resistance against Napoleon I.

Most of the German people now regard the anti-Hitler conspirators as martyrs. When I was in Stauffenberg's native town of Bamberg seven years ago, I saw a prominently located memorial to him.

GRAUSTARK #788

John Boardman
234 East 19th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11226-5302

BROOKLYN
14 JAN 2000



FIRST CLASS MAIL

- () - Sample copy.
- () - You may be interested in an item on p. ____.

Jim Burgess
664 Smith Street
Providence, RI
02908-4327

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